X

WAR REOPENS SINKIANG

SHENG SHIH-TS'AI'S TECHNIQUE, which favored guidance and help from Soviet Russia, had at first required as strict and selective control as possible over all other contact with Sinkiang from the outside. This in the main kept knowledge of what was happening in Sinkiang from the rest of China as well as from the rest of the world. The province, for most purposes, became autonomous and isolated, and with Soviet help Sheng Shih-ts'ai kept it so.

Open warfare between China and Japan in 1937, however, made it necessary for Sheng to allow a limited relaxation of his policy. He permitted Soviet military supplies to come into Eastern China and allowed Chinese wool, skins, tea, and bristles to get out in repayment to Soviet Russia over tightly controlled truck highways running through his province. By 1939 the outbreak of European war also made it advisable and possible to open Chinese-Russian air communications via Sinkiang. But a large measure of the provincial seclusion was strictly maintained. A rigid watch was kept over what strangers went in and out of the province, and strict penalties were invoked by government authorities on trespass of transit privileges.

Now, however, the policy of extreme Sinkiang seclusion has at last been discarded. By the spring of 1942, Japanese pressure on Yünnan Province had forced Chinese attention to the Northwest, and especially to Sinkiang. Soviet Russia, in contrast, was less able to provide the personnel and resources that had been earlier available. Since there is doubt that Sinkiang can longer count on Soviet Russia's direct help, she has turned for assistance to the Chinese National Government and to other United Nations powers.

Nationalist China has already acted dynamically to replace the aid which Soviet Russia gave to Tihwa for almost a decade. In so doing she has initiated a sweeping program of reconstruction in the Chinese Northwest, has emphasized new ties with India and the Middle East, and has shown new co-operation with the United States and the United